

Article - Local Government

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§4–305.

(a) (1) By a petition presented to the legislative body of a municipality, at least 20% of the qualified voters for the municipal general election may initiate a proposed amendment to the municipal charter.

(2) Each individual signing the petition shall indicate on the petition the individual's name and residence address.

(b) (1) On receiving the petition, the legislative body shall verify that each individual who signed the petition is a qualified voter for the municipal general election.

(2) The petition has no effect if it is signed by less than 20% of the qualified voters for the municipal general election.

(c) (1) Before voting on the proposed amendment initiated by the petition presented under subsection (a) of this section, the legislative body shall:

(i) hold a public hearing on the proposed amendment; and

(ii) give at least 21 days' advance notice of the public hearing.

(2) If the legislative body approves of the amendment in the petition presented under subsection (a) of this section, the legislative body may adopt the proposed amendment by resolution and proceed in the same manner as if the amendment had been initiated by the legislative body and in compliance with §§ 4–303(a) and 4–304 of this subtitle.

(d) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, if the petition complies with this section, the legislative body, no later than 60 days after the petition is presented to the legislative body, shall specify by resolution adopted in accordance with its normal legislative procedure:

(1) the day and hours for the referendum; and

(2) the exact text that is to be placed on the ballot.

(e) (1) The legislative body may schedule the referendum for the next regular municipal general election or at a special election.

(2) If the legislative body schedules a special election, it shall be held not less than 40 days or more than 60 days after the resolution scheduling the referendum is adopted.

(f) The chief executive officer of the municipality shall give notice of a submission of a proposed charter amendment by:

(1) (i) posting an exact copy of the proposed amendment at the main municipal building or other public place for at least 4 weeks immediately preceding the referendum at which the question is to be submitted; and

(ii) on the day of the referendum, posting a similar copy at the place for voting; and

(2) publishing notice of the referendum and a fair summary of the proposed amendment in a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality at least once in each of the 4 weeks immediately preceding the referendum.

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